

Meredith Herald

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We attract bright, talented, ambitious students. Naturally we're a women's college.

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Public History major to begin in fall 1997

By Emily Fulghum

Are you interested in working in a museum, in archives or at a historical site? Then a degree in public history would help to make these jobs, as well as many others in the same field, available without having a graduate degree. Until now, that was the only way students in the United States could be exposed to this type of curriculum.

Dr. Bill Price, along with Drs. Frank Grubbs and Michael Novak, has been working to set up an undergraduate degree program in public history at Meredith, and in fall of 1997, the major will be offered for the first time.

"To our knowledge, this program will be the first of its kind to be offered at an undergraduate level anywhere in the country," said Price. "Many schools, such as NCSU, have excellent graduate programs in public history. But ours is different from a graduate program in that they are much more intense. We will prepare students for a whole range of opportunities at entry-level positions such as field surveyors, managers at small historic sites or jobs at any one of the 200 independent history-related organizations in the Southeast."

Price also stated that Meredith is an ideal institution at which to launch this new major because of its location. He said that "this program is feasible because Meredith is located in Raleigh." Price continued, "There are a number of opportunities for internships or 'hands-on' experiences. Places like the new Museum of Development or any of the surrounding historical sites offer a good training ground for students in this major."

When Price began this endeavor, he brought to it his vast experience in this field. For 25 years, he worked for the Division of Archives and History of North Carolina, and for 15 of those years, he was director of the division. When he retired from this position in 1995 and joined the faculty of the Meredith history department, the division was the largest state historical agency in the United States. Therefore, as he began brainstorming about the new major in September of 1996, his long service and connections served him well in the quest for more information and ideas on starting a program in public history. Price and Novak went to representatives of various public his-

tory agencies in Raleigh to determine the criteria degree candidates would have to meet to find employment.

The next step was looking through the Meredith Course Guide to see what classes were already offered and what classes they would have to introduce to suit the major. Price said that this task was "not too hard because Meredith already offers so many courses that we needed due to our program's similarity to an American history major." However, the history department has revamped some existing elective courses to offer courses specifically designed and required for a public history major. Eighteen to 24 hours must be completed in these required courses. Optional related courses, which make up the remaining 12-18 hours, include art, business, computer, speech, interior design, education, economic, and English classes.

This new major has generated a lot of excitement in the history department. When asked about his opinion of this new endeavor, Novak stated, "I think this is really big."

Single-sex education proved to be beneficial

By Emily Fulghum

At Meredith College, a private women's college in Raleigh, North Carolina, one of the hottest items in the school store is a T-shirt with the warning: "Better Dead than Co-Ed" — and it seems to be the consensus at most women's colleges across the nation. A feeling of uncertainty has swept over many of those 80 some campuses in the wake of the Supreme Court's decision, led by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, ordering the Virginia Military Institute to become co-ed.

There is good reason for these women to fear the futures of their alma maters. This second blow, after the Shannon Faulkner/Citadel incident, could prove to be the beginning of the end of single-sex education in this country. To students at women's colleges, this is truly cause for alarm as the quality of the education they are receiving is one of the leading factors in the rapid rise of successful professional women today.

The battles over VMI and The Citadel have unfolded against a backdrop of rhetoric about the way schools and colleges "shortchange girls", offering an "unfair" climate. This is the thinking that has given us the Gender Equality Act, which quietly made its way through the last Congress. Some might ask whether this special intervention on behalf of women does more harm than good. Others might ask if they are really necessary as indicators show a trend towards women's colleges in the light of proof that they are leading the fight to provide women an increasingly large place in a man's world.

By now, the benefits of single-sex education for women have been reported so often that one might think the future of this type of institution would be stable. But apparently, statistics showing that graduates of women's colleges are twice as likely as their counterparts at co-ed schools to excel in traditionally male-dominated fields such as natural sciences, business and government, are not enough proof. Women are entering graduate and professional schools in record numbers and when they enter the job

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N.C. puts education first in new budget

By Wendy Kelly

The North Carolina General Assembly will open today with a budget plan from Governor Hunt that calls on all members to put education first. Dr. Tom Houlihan, Hunt's senior education advisor, has been instrumental in Governor Hunt's plans to put education at the forefront in North Carolina.

Houlihan can rarely be found at his home on Second Street in Smithfield nor in his downtown Raleigh office. You may catch him walking between meetings with legislators or teachers and school administrators. If you're lucky, you can spot him in his car on the phone. Houlihan can also be found cheering his son on at a Smithfield-Selma High basketball game when his job does not take him to another meeting out of state. His mission to improve North Carolina's schools keeps him on the go.

Houlihan was Johnston County's Superintendent of Schools until he joined Hunt's team. For Houlihan, education has been a way of life. He knew growing up that teaching was his calling. There was not really one teacher that opened his mind to the idea; the desire came out of instinct. "As a child of the 60's, I wanted to be of service," says Houlihan when asked about his career choice. The move from the classroom to the administrative aspect of education resulted from his wish to influence more people.

Houlihan's need to help others made the decision easier to take a pay cut, add a 35-minute commute and leave a job he liked to become Hunt's advisor. At the state level, he hopes to have even more of a positive impact on improving education.

When asked about his future in an elected

capacity, he asserts that his role is one of a practitioner. "If I had wanted to run for office, I would have done so as state superintendent this year," he says. He is certain that his present position satisfies his desire to be of service.

Houlihan's chance to be a part of improving North Carolina's schools through Hunt's aggressive education agenda is coming during the N.C. General Assembly's long session this year. Smart Start is the governor's plan to have all children ready to learn when they begin school. His agenda includes raising teachers salary to the national average by the year 2000. In a press release yesterday from Governor Hunt's Press Office, he outlines a budget plan that will expand Smart Start to all 100 counties and raise stan-

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